## Youth Choir, Orchestra wrap '06 tour

By Micki Bennett Correspondent

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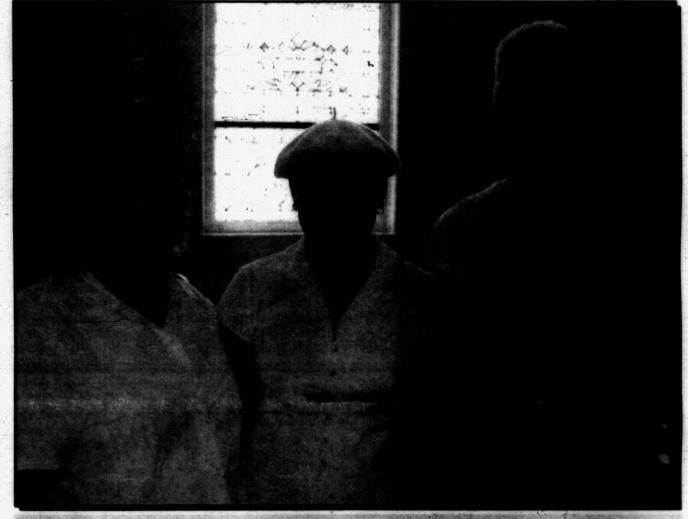
The Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra will soon conclude its 2006 tour across the state. The three-day rehearsal camp and seven-day concert tour was the 14th in the choir's history, which started with 45 members and has grown this year to over 120 high school students.

"These young people share their love for Christ throughout the state and across the country," said coordinator Susan Luttrell, youth/drama consultant for the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Luttrell and many others who claim the choir as family have seen first-hand how lives are affected by being a part of All-State. One such life was that of Renee Phillips of Camden, Del., a junior in high school when she first became a part of the choir in 2002 during the partnership between Mississippi Baptists and the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware.

Renee so loved the choir and community of believers that summer that she returned the following summer. The vibrant, young alto graduated out of the choir, but surprised everyone the very next year with a visit during the choir's summer tour.

Renee, along with her mother Donna and father Rick, followed the choir's three tour busses to each church on its schedule. During every concert Renee joined the choir on the last song, as all choir alumni are invited to do. "The Lord bless you and keep you," she sang while wearing a pink beret, "the Lord make his face to shine upon you and give you peace."



ALL-STAR CHOIR FAN — Renee Phillips (center), a former member of the Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir, toured with the choir even after her eligibility expired. She and her parents Donna (left) and Rick attended every stop on the choir's 2005 tour. Renee died shortly thereafter, succumbing to a year long battle with cancer. (Photos courtesy of Carl M. White)

Sadly, that would be Renee's last All-State Choir encounter. She died on September 12 after a year long battle against lung cancer. Her legacy of love for the All-State Choir lives

All-State Choir lives on, however, through a memorial scholar-ship established by an anonymous donor just prior to her death. It was the wish of Renee and her family that the money be given to financially assist a deserving student preparing to be a part of the choir. Renee specifically wanted

the 2006 recipient to be a student affected by Hurricane Katrina, as her heart went out to the victims from the coast.

**Bourne** 

"In studying the roster of students selected for the 2006 group, we found six students from the Gulf Coast," said Luttrell. She learned that Utica Church, Utica, had enough money to provide scholarships for all four choir

members from Grace Memorial Church in Gulfport. Another student from First Church, Long Beach, whose family lost everything, was fully covered financially by

"Their whole church facility was blown away and many of their members were homeless, but they still gave to take care of this young lady," Luttrell said. "Someone in the church had bought her dress and a lady in the church had given specifically to pay her

choir fee."

That left just one student in question — returning choir member Kerianne Bourne of Arlington Heights Church in Pascagoula. Her father Scott was minister of music at the church when Hurricane Katrina hit. "Their family lived in his office at the church for five weeks while they waited for their FEMA trailer," said Luttrell.

Bourne was so thankful when she realized that she would be the scholarship recipient. "I didn't know if we were going to have the money [for All-State] because of all the repairs on our house," she said, "but now I'm so excited." She's counting down the days until she's reunited with old friends.

Though she did not know Renee personally, the two girls have something in common, the bond that most everyone shares by being a part of the choir: a love for her All-State brothers and sisters in Christ.

The choir and orchestra's 2006 tour will conclude on June 16 at First Church, Florence, but with over \$3,000 committed to the Renee Phillips Memorial Scholarship Fund to date, the money will provide for at least one All-State student a year for the next six years.

Editor's note: Correspondent Micki Bennett is assistant editor of Metro Christian Living magazine in Jackson.



BAPTISTS

Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra Home Concert June 16 – 6:30 p.m.

### **EDITOR'S** *<u>NOTEBOOK</u>*



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## When is a human, a human?

The issue of using unborn humans to harvest components valuable in therapeutic research isn't going away any time soon. We can add that item to the large and troublesome list of ways people have found to mistreat members of their own race.

The web site MSNBC reports that researchers with Children's Hospital Boston, the main pediatric teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, are

preparing to join the growing number of organizations that plan to clone human embryos for the benefit of treating intractable diseases like sickle cell anemia, leukemia, and other blood disorders.

Cloning is the process by which a tiny human "egg" from a woman's ovary is removed and duplicated without the union of egg and sperm that occurs in the natural process of human reproduction. There is great debate on the humanity of the clone and the ethics of whether it can be destroyed in the name of medical research.

It all sounds so well-meaning. Who wouldn't want to cure fearsome diseases like sickle cell

anemia, leukemia, and diabetes for which cloning is touted as a miracle treatment? Actually, it's not the cloning process that will purportedly produce the cures, but the undifferentiated stem cells that will be stripped from the insides of the embryos and coaxed to grow into special-ized cells. Those cells would then be used to treat a variety of ailments.



Therein lies the foundation of the debate on the worth of the clone. Is a cloned human actually human? After all, it didn't arrive in its pre-born state in the usual way. Does that individual person exist, if another genetically-identical person pre-exists? Does it deserve constitutional protections for its unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? (That's a moot question in America, where an unborn

child can be killed and disposed of at any stage of gestation, from fertilization to birth, through legalized abortion.)

This is an especially prickly issue because of the emerging body of evidence that there are many other ways to retrieve human stem cells without destroying pre-born humans. Stem cells have been found in abundance in umbilical cord blood and in lesser amounts in skin, nasal tissue, and even in the colon. It's just that science, which recognizes no inherent ethics except those attached to it by people, wants to take the path of least resistance — and that path is to clone and then destroy the

embryos for their parts.
There are still many questions to answer about such research, and many of those questions may never be answered. That's why Christians should be involved in this most important debate, and why we must insist to be included in that debate.

Southern Baptist bioethicist C. Ben Mitchell, a consultant for the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, believes that whatever the outcome of the debate, our society must be careful not to view humans at any stage of life as "natural resources we can strip mine. Human beings deserve respect, not commodification." (Baptist Press, 10/18/05).

Surely, all Christians can agree on that.

WASHINGTON (BP) Eight senators spoke on the floor during debate on the Marriage Protection Amendment, which failed on June 5. Three supported the amendment, five opposed it. Following is a sampling of what senators said, in order of

when they spoke:

• Harry Reid (D.-Nev.)

opposed the amendment.

"I believe marriage should

be between a man and a woman, but I also believe in our federal system of government, described to me in college as a central whole divided among self-governing parts. Those self-governing parts — the 50 states — have already in state after state after state decided this on their own, and others are deciding it as we speak."
• Arlen Specter, (R.-Pa.),

opposed the amendment.

"I do believe that marriage is a sacred institution between a man and a woman."... I believe that former Sen. Barry Goldwater said it comprehensively and succinctly when he said, 'Government ought to be kept off our backs, out of our pocketbooks and out of our bedrooms' — and that this is a matter which ought to be left to the states, and the

states are taking care of it."
• Patrick Leahy (D.-Vt.) opposed the amendment.

The Republican leader has decided that today, our nation's most pressing priority is concern over committed relation-

## What senators said about marriage

ships between same-sex couples ... The Constitution is too important to be used for such a partisan, political purpose."

• Wayne Allard (R.-Co.) sup-

ported the amendment.

"Today there are numerous efforts to redefine marriage to be something that it isn't...Two women or two men simply do not meet the criteria for marriage as it has been defined for thousands of years. Marriage is and it always has been a union between a man and a woman. I believe the framers of the Constitution felt that this would never be an issue, and if they had, it would have been included in the U.S. Constitution.

"... Like the vast majority of Americans, it would have never occurred to me that the definition of marriage or marriage itself would be the source of controversy... Some of my colleagues feel we shouldn't be talking about marriage in the Senate. I say we must. Our government is a three branch government. The Congress is the branch that represents the people most directly. We have a

duty... to discuss the state of marriage in America. If we do not take this up, we abdicate our responsibilities. We will allow the courts sole dominion on the state and future of marriage."

• Tim Johnson (D.-S.D.) opposed the amendment.

'My state of South Dakota already has enacted an anti-gay marriage law, and it's taking up a possible state constitutional amendment to that effect, but that is where the debate ought to be taking place — in South Dakota and in the other states [and] not here in D.C.

Sam Brownback (R.-Kan.)

supported the amendment. "[This debate is] about who is going to define marriage in America. It's not whether marriage is going to be defined. It's about who is going to define marriage in America. Is it going to be defined by the courts that have started this debate, or is it going to be defined by legislatures and legislative bodies across the country?"

... There hardly could be a more important issue than the foundational structure of how

we build this society, and how societies have been built for thousands of years. They've been built around the institution of marriage — of a man and a woman bonded together for life, and out of that families

develop and grow and prosper and children are raised..."

"You have 45 of the 50 states already speaking on this, say-ing marriage is the union of a man and a woman — feeling it is so important that they want to act before the Congress can act, before the Constitution can be amended.

 Byron Dorgan (D.-N.D.) opposed the amendment.
"The current law, the

Defense of Marriage Act, which the federal government passed in 1996, still stands, so I see no reason to amendment the United States Constitution."

 John Cornyn (R.-Texas) supported the amendment.

This is not an issue that we have raised gratuitously or out of thin air. This is a fight that really has been brought to the American people by those would seek to use the courts to advance their agenda to call marriage between one man and one woman ... discrimination...

"This almost seems surreal to me. The last thing I thought I would end up doing, coming to Washington and the United States Senate, would be ... having to defend the institution of traditional marriage. I thought some things were given."

### Marriage amendment defeated in Senate

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — The United States Senate on June 7 rejected an attempt to amend the U.S. Constitution to protect marriage, with supporters gaining only one additional vote in the nearly two years since their most recent effort.

After two full days of debate, Senators voted 49-48 for a procedural move to bring the Marriage Protection Amendment (MPA) to the floor for an upor-down vote. The maneuver, known as "invoking cloture," required 60 votes to succeed, however. If the amendment had reached the floor, it-would have needed 67 votes, a two-thirds majority, to pass.

Mississippi Senators Thad Cochran and Trent Lott both voted to invoke cloture and bring the proposal to the Senate floor.

In July 2004, 48 senators supported ending debate and holding a vote on the proposal. Fifty senators voted against "invoking cloture." The addition of only one vote came despite the Republican Party's gain of four Senate seats in the 2004 election.

The MPA, S.J. Res. 1, would define marriage as the union of a man and a woman in an attempt to protect the institution against continuing legal efforts to

legalize "gay marriage."

So far, Massachusetts is the only state to have legalized "gay marriage," but amendment supporters predict courts will continue to expand marriage to include homosexual couples unless a federal amendment is ratified to address the problem. High courts in New Jersey, New York, and Washington appear poised to legitimize same-sex unions before the end of the year.

Despite the Senate setback, the House of Representatives intends to vote on the proposal in July, Majority Leader John Boehner (R.-Ohio) told reporters.

"This is an issue that is of significant importance to many Americans," Boehner said, according to The Washington Post. "We have significant numbers of our members who want a vote on this, so we are going to have a vote."

An amendment requires approval by a two-thirds majority in each house of Congress before it goes to the states.

Three-fourths of the states must pass an amendment before it becomes part of the Constitution.

Afterward, amendment advocates expressed regret at the vote but promised to keep working for its ratification.

Acknowledging he is "disappointed," President Bush said in written remarks, "My position on this issue is clear: Marriage is the most fundamental institution of our society, and it should not be redefined by activist judges. The people must be heard on this issue."

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, told Baptist Press, "Defenders of marriage owe a debt of gratitude to Majority Leader Bill Frist and the other senators who insisted over the objections of many of their colleagues on both sides of the aisle that this issue come to the floor for a vote. They should also draw encouragement that we did get one more vote than in 2004.

"They should be disgusted by the pathetic failure of the Senate to do far better on this issue than it did," Land said. "One doesn't eat an apple in one bite. Most amendments fail on their first or second introduction. And those who understand that this is the only way to safeguard marriage as between only a man and a woman must redouble their efforts and realize that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step and then the next step and the next step and the next step."

Frist of Tennessee said in a written statement, "We must continue fighting to ensure the Constitution is amended by the will of the people rather than by judicial activism,"

The Alliance for Marriage (AFM), which drafted the MPA, also pledged to continue its effort. "Today's vote was an important step in the democratic process to protect the future of marriage for our children and grandchildren," AFM President Matt Daniels said in a written release. "The future of marriage in America is a race between the courts and [the amendment]."

Tony Perkins, president of the Family

Research Council, called the Senate "grossly out of step with the American people" but said "values voters" would work to elect amendment supporters to that body.

The Democratic Party, homosexual rights groups, and at least one churchstate organization applauded the vote and castigated Republicans for spending the Senate's time on the amendment.

The amendment's consideration marked an effort by Bush and Frist "to use the politics of fear and division in an attempt to distract attention" from GOP failures, said Howard Dean, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, in a written statement. "The fact that Republicans in Washington chose to focus on a divisive effort to scapegoat LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender] Americans for political gain instead of addressing the real business of the nation shows why the American people need new leadership in Washington."

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, described the vote as "election-year politics at its worst. I'm glad the amendment was derailed, but it never should have been voted on. This vote was nothing but ammo for attack ads [before the November election]."

Two Democrats joined 47 Republicans in voting to end debate and hold an up-ordown vote on the amendment. Meanwhile, 40 Democrats, seven Republicans and an independent opposed the procedural move. Three senators did not vote.

Two Republican senators who supported a floor vote on the amendment in



## BAPTISTS

# THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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2004 opposed the same action this time. Judd Gregg of New Hampshire and Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania.

In addition to Gregg and Specter, the other GOP members who voted "no" were Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island, Susan Collins of Maine, John McCain of Arizona, Olympia Snowe of Maine, and John Sununu of New Hampshire.

The Democrats who voted "yes" were Robert Byrd of West Virginia and Ben Nelson of Nebraska.

Not voting were Sens. Christopher Dodd (D.-Conn.), Chuck Hagel (R.-Neb.), and John Rockefeller (D.-W.Va.). In 2004, Hagel voted in support of floor action on the amendment.

Senate foes of the amendment contended during the debate leading to the vote the proposal was a political move to gain votes for Republican in this fall's election.

### Problems foreseen

WASHINGTON (BP) — The expansion of homosexual marriage in the United States would create clashes between church and state that might restrict the religious freedom of Americans who oppose such unions, legal scholars predict. The legalization of homosexual marriage, it was forecast, could impact, for example, the housing and employment policies of religious schools and other institutions and even the tax-exempt status of churches and parachurch organizations. "Legal redefinition of marriage will be an engine for religious freedom litigation for years to come," said Anthony Picarello, president of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty. "Wherever same-sex marriage' is part of the law, government will be requiring equal treatment of 'same-sex marriage,' and that is something most religious groups cannot abide. And that means church-state conflict." Recognizing the potential for conflict, the Becket Fund convened a private conference of nine legal scholars last December to examine the implications for religious liberty of legalized homosexual marriage and to produce papers on the topic. Despite their differences, the scholars all agreed that the legalization of homosexual marriage will produce widespread clashes between church and state. "It appears there will be two categories of cases in this conflict, Picarello said. In one, the state will seek to directly compel churches and religious organizations "to treat same-sex and different-sex couples equally on threat of liability." In the other, churches may win a legal challenge of the state's action on First Amendment grounds, but the government might punish them by withdrawing benefits or accommodations it would normally provide. The cases could involve everything from student housing at a religious university to a plot in a cemetery operated by a church or religious organization, and "hundreds of things" in between, Picarello said.

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board names William H. Perkins Jr. of Ridgeland as editor of The Baptist Record, and Paul A. Pinson of Madison, as manager of the MBCB Accounting Department.

#### 20 years ago

John G. McCall, pastor for 30 years of First Church, Vicksburg, and a former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is appointed to head Mississippi College's Department of Religion and Philosophy.

#### 60 years ago

A post-war Father's Day editorial admonishes Baptist fathers, "Today you are training those who will either rule or ruin our world tomorrow. Those who will lead us to gore or glory are your sons of today."



#### YOU CAN RESPOND **RIGHT Now!**

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

- 1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
- 2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
- 3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
- 4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (1 receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

### **Corrections**

The Housetops section of the June 8 issue contained an announcement concerning Family Enrichment Week on July 2-5. That event has been cancelled. The Baptist Record regrets the error.

On page six of the June 1 issue, an error was made in the listing of the pastor of Mt. Carmel Church, Edinburg. The church's pastor is Keith Fulton. The Baptist Record regrets the error.

#### THE DAD DILEMMA

Father's Day is upon us, and I hope for those of you who are dads that it will be a great day. For those of you who have a father, I trust that it will be a good time for you as well. Father's Day is probably the result of an afterthought. Mother's Day started and was an immense success, and my guess is that some years later having to deal with poor ole dad being neglected drove various folks to say that we ought to have a Father's Day. Actually, at the early part of the nineteenth century Mrs. John Dodd wanted to honor her father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran who had lost his wife when their children were small and raised them

as a single parent. Regardless of how it started, Father's Day is a good opportunity for us to think about dads and to seek to honor our dads as the Scripture teaches. From a scriptural standpoint the commandment says, "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long on the earth" (Exodus 20:12). There is something about growing up in the atmosphere of a home where a mom and dad love and care for their children in appropriate ways, and where the children learn to respect authority and appreciate the care that is given in significant ways that makes a difference in a person's life reflected both in the length of life and in the degree of fulfill-

ment that they experience in life. Fathers are important. They can make a difference in their children's lives and the children can experience that difference in their lives because of their relationship to dad. Beyond participating in the gene pool and being available to walk their daughter down the aisle at her wedding, our society recognizes little true value of the dad in the home. God does not share this view. Dads, as well as moms, have special roles that make a difference in siblings and all society. It is not easy being a dad, mom, or a kid in the home for it is a complex, on-going, and challenging experience. If we are not careful we will focus on the difficulties more



# Directi

lim Futral, executive director-treasurer Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

than on the delights, and the ongoing day-by-day and hourby-hour struggle will take its toll to the point where a person can become discouraged, disillusioned, and totally drained.

For a few moments let me address the complexity and dilemmas of being a dad. First, look at the bad dad. Don't leave me here. At some time or another most dads will run into enough difficulties that they feel like they have not done their job and they are failures. You look back on experiences and relationships with your family and you think about missed opportunities, times when you were inconsiderate and thoughtless, or times when you were unable to do with your hands what your heart wanted to do. Usually when we think about those moments, we are unable to remember or see the other questions, decisions, or deficiencies that prevented us from doing what we wished we had done resulting in our guilt and frustration.

I have often told people that it really doesn't matter what you do while raising your children, it will be wrong and/or it will be right. By that I mean that when a child grows up it is easy for them to look back and say well my mom did not do this, did not take us, did not teach us, did not... You fill in the blank. At the same time that child may grow up, make decisions, rebel, and say, "When I was growing up my mom and dad made me do this, go there, attend church, try out for the ball teams, and I resented all of that."

Maybe the key is to under-stand that with the best of our ability and from the depths of our love we try to do what God has instructed us, follow the guidelines He has given us, and then

lean mightily upon His grace. In the book of Romans the Apostle Paul tells us that, "Where sin doth abound grace doth much more abound" (Romans 5:20). It is a fact that while all of us may at times feel like we have failed and some dads may feel that they are bad dads, God's grace is sufficient so dad, if you happen to be approaching Father's Day with a large degree of regret and feel like a bad dad, I encourage you to trust God, ask Him to intervene and fill in the gaping holes in not only your children's lives but your own, and today find His wonderful grace — a life chang-ing, dad changing, and family changing reality

Let me move on and share with you some thoughts about a glad dad. Father's Day ought to be a day when dad can look back and be flooded with memories that bring a smile to his face and a chuckle to his heart. My own father has been dead for almost three decades. Frequently, I will run into someone who knew him and many of them will remember his infectious laughter and his general jovial approach to life.

For years when my wife and I would go to a Baptist meeting somewhere and wonder if my dad was going to be there, we would just listen a little while and then hear him laughing. It is a treasure that I hold dear although he has been gone for many years. A merry heart doeth good like a medicine and many a dad could certainly help the health condition of their family by bringing some joy into the home. Some people seem to bring to every experience in life a response of anger or condemnation when many of those same things could be responded to with laughter. It is not easy for

a dad just to be a buddy, a pal, a good friend because there are boundaries to set, limits to be enforced, and guidance to be given. The other side of that is there is so much that can be celebrated, and laughed at, and enjoyed with your family. For many of you, I hope that this Father's Day will be another experience of being a glad dad.

Finally, let me say a word about the sad dad. The upcoming day is not a happy occasion for many dads. Memories of the loss of a child, disease, or some tragedy - and for some of you the loss of your own dad through death, or maybe desertion, or possibly from just disinterest — causes you to remember and be a sad dad. Maybe you grew up without a father and there is a large empty place that just brings sadness to you. Let me encourage you to think about the following actions this coming Sunday. If you no longer have a dad and you live with the burden of that emptiness, find someone who is a father figure and a role model that you can honor. You do not have to do anything extraordinary, but just go out of your way to pay tribute to him. It would mean a lot to you and it would be incredible for him. On the other hand some of you may be missing your child and you can honor someone in the circle of your knowledge of influence who is the kind of boy, girl, young man, or young woman who you would have delighted in having as your child. Let them know how much you appreciate them and the significance that you play in your life in seeing them and maybe your family as a quality Christian influence. It will do them a world of good, and it will do you even more good. It probably will remove a large portion of the sadness from your life. To each of you dads struggling to be what God wants you to be and seeking to influence and bless your family, God bless you and have a wonderful and glorious Father's Day.

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## Lottie Moon Offering sets new record in '05

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — It's a new record that's reaffirming an old commit-ment. \$137,939,677.59; that's what Southern Baptists gave to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International successful year in the offering's history.
The \$137.9 million marks a three percent

increase over 2004's \$133.9 million Lottie Moon offering, not to mention a 1.3% over the Moon offering, not to mention a 1.3% over the old record set in 2003 — \$136.2 million. More than 5,100 International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries depend on the annual offering, of which every penny is used to support their work sharing the Gospel around the world. "This historic level of giving will enable us to send an increasing number of God-called missionary candidates moving toward appointment," said Jerry Rankin, IMB president. "It will enable us to push for-

ward in fulfilling the vision of bringing all peoples to saving faith in Jesus Christ. At a me of economic uncertainty, and a year in which massive amounts of funding have been directed toward hurricane relief and recovery, it is gratifying to see God prove His faithfulness through Southern Baptists." Clyde Meador, IMB executive vice

president, echoed Rankin's sentiments and acknowledged the critical role of the Woman's Missionary Union in the

offering's success.

"The IMB wouldn't be able to do any of this without the faithful support of our state and national Woman's Missionary Union partners," Meador said. "Long ago, WMU laid the foundation for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering because Lottie Moon Christmas Offering because they understood the eternal significance of sharing Christ with a lost world.

Today, they remain committed to international missions as they promote the Lottie Moon offering on a grassroots level to more than 42,000 Southern Baptist churches."

"We are grateful that Southern Baptists continue to give sacrificially to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering as evidenced in the record offering totals for 2005," said Wanda Lee, executive director/treasurer of national WMU. "In partnership with state WMU offices, WMU leaders in

churches and the International Mission Board, it is a joy to see our churches embrace the Great Commission."

Johnson Ferry Church in Marietta, Ga., took the No. 1 spot on the list of 2005's top 100 giving churches, adding \$656,951.44 to the Lottie Moon offering. Among the top 100 churches, Mount Vernon Church in Boone, N.C. cannot be most our credit. N.C., gave the most per capita.

## Welch has hopes, concerns for SBC as term nears end

EDITORS' NOTE: Joni B. Hannigan, managing editor of the Florida Baptist Witness, spent three days in late April with Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch to give readers a glimpse of expectations for the future of the Southern Baptist Convention.

GREENSBORO N.C. (BP and local reports) — Admitting the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) will never be without struggles, outgoing SBC President Bobby Welch pledged to "give the best of the rest" of his life to urging and encouraging Southern Baptists to focus on evangelism.

"I have considered all other options and there is nothing in existence today — all of us will die and our children will die, before we will ever again see any organization or organism [such] as the SBC with its potential to change the world," Welch said. "There is nothing to compare with it." Insisting he was not bragging, Welch

Insisting he was not bragging, Welch said he is humble and appreciative of what God has done with the SBC – but Baptists' best efforts are yet needed so that "not only have we reclaimed the inerrancy of the Scripture, but that we reclaimed the Great Commission of that inerrant Scripture," Welch said in a wide-ranging interview with the Florida Baptist Witness in Greensboro, N.C., in late April.

Welch, 63, announced his retirement May 28 from the pastorate of First Church in Daytona Beach, Fla., effective Aug. 27 when he'll assume the role of pastor emeritus.

the role of pastor emeritus.

Approaching the end of his second one-year term as SBC president, Welch said he believes it was providential for him to have served at the helm of the convention at a time when his church brought in a co-pastor looking ahead to Welch's transition toward retirement.

"That co-pastor [David Cox] is already called as the next preacher and he's been there now three years," Welch said. "So these last two years ended up being a tailor-made godsend to complete or culminate that transition from me to him."

Welch said Cox's presence at the church has allowed him to become an unusual SBC president, one who has met masses of Southern Baptists and their pastors at churches — after hurricanes and on the steps of burned-out sanctuaries, urging individuals to share the Gospel with his "Everyone Can!" battle cry.

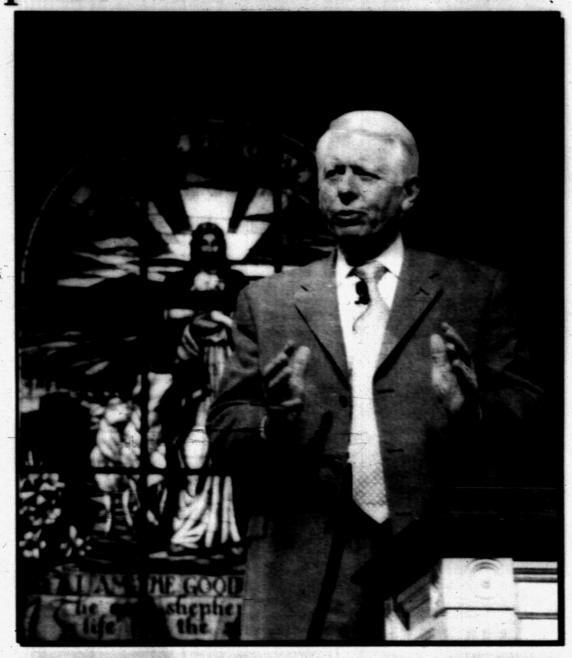
"It is not possible for the preacher in average pastoring circumstances to do what I have done," Welch said, "because you cannot walk away from the church for two years."

On being SBC president

In reflecting on his service as SBC president at this juncture in the convention's history, Welch said it was "God arranging things for such a time as this," citing the Annual Church Profile report which says the number of Southern Baptists churches declined by 11% between 2004-05 and circumstances at the North American Mission Board prompted a change in its leadership.

"It's no wonder that I think God was preparing to sort of try and bridge the gap and fill in the blank during these struggling times," Welch said of his leadership and emphasis on evangelism.

Providing practical advice for how Southern Baptists should approach problems and differences of opinion, Welch said "this convention must learn to play hurt ... [and] fight wounded."



IN PULPIT — Preaching at Mud Creek Church in Hendersonville, N.C., Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch visited North Carolina churches in March and April to promote the Crossover Triad evangelistic outreach June 10-11 in Greensboro, N.C. (BP photo by Joni B. Hannigan/Florida Baptist Witness)

"We must become specialists at solving our problems while at the same time moving toward our objective," Welch said. "We have fallen into the trap too often where ... we all shut down everything and run to the problem and obsess on the problems.... We have to learn to stay on the high ground and solve our problems as we move along."

SBC entities

Responding to questions about the role of the SBC president in helping the SBC boards and entities work through their various challenges, Welch said any president would be "duty bound" to look out for the best interests of the convention, but going beyond praying for those involved and being available for questions and conversation might be considered intrusive.

"The president of the convention, I think, generally, unless he's really a busybody, he does not [get involved], he is not the CEO of all these organizations," Welch said. "[The entities] really have no responsibility to report to him about what they are doing and he really has no responsibility to pry into their business."

Welch recounted having a close working relationship with disaster relief personnel at the North American Mission Board in response to the hurricane crises of the past few years and he in connecting with state executives from the Gulf Coast areas to encourage them and provide a networking of sorts during those trying times.

"My belief is that there should be an asterisk forever and always put by the year 2005 because that's going to have significant long-range implications as to giving, other additions, baptisms and all that" among Southern Baptists in the Gulf Coast states.

"We are not going to get over this in a year. This has been significantly traumatic for us. And as you say, all these numbers are down but the giving is up, how do you explain it? The money came in because of [Hurricane] Katrina, but that will not always be the case."

Lamenting the fact his own church was down in the number of baptisms from 2004-05, Welch said that didn't surprise him. "One of the reasons is, I have been gone," he said. "That has not helped any. I hope they are going to be up this year. This ... is the year of the million."

Expanding on his view that the SBC president should not be overly involved in the actions of trustee boards of entities, Welch responded to questions of his view of the new International Mission Board guidelines on baptism approved by trustees during his tenure.

"At the end of the whole discussion, what I believe is that we have the trustee approach to operations in place and we have to trust that and let them work," Welch said. "I am trusting them to continue to work through this. I don't think

we are finished with it. I expect there will be conversation on these subjects on the floor of the convention."

Baptism

On what he believes and his church practices regarding baptism, Welch said he believes scriptural baptism is "when you are immersed in a local church to show the outward expression of your inward commitment to the Lord. I think every believer should follow the Lord in believer's baptism.

"First Baptist Daytona just doesn't open its arms to everybody who says, 'Hey, I've been put under the water,' just because they say [that]," he continued.

If a person was baptized by a church which believes in regenerate baptism, for instance, Welch said they would not accept that as scriptural baptism because "that's not 'like faith and practice."

That said, "Now when you come to the question, what do I think about the IMB's policy on baptism, now that's two different things," he explained. Expressing confidence in the way SBC entities are led by boards of trustees, Welch said that's the way of things.

"The truth of it is that we have to labor under where the board is now. Because that's the way it works. It really doesn't matter at this point what I think about, what you think about, or what [IMB President] Jerry Rankin thinks about it; it's what the board has said is the policy," Welch said. "We live by the board. They make the rules and that's the way it works. We can all say, 'Well, I don't do it just like that,' or 'I don't do it like this.' But that's how it works; we elect those trustees to be trusted people."

Welch said he believes the IMB's trustees should work to resolve their difficulties and not bring these issues to the convention floor of the SBC annual

meeting in Greensboro.

"The convention is not equipped, in my view, in a general assembly, to deal with all these circumstances. That's why we have the trusteeship," Welch emphasized.

"It is a disservice to the convention, because the convention is not best equipped to deal with these things as a whole. It is like when trustees and CEOs cannot handle the circumstance and it is forced to the floor of the convention," Welch continued. "That is tantamount to sending a man with a splinter in his eye out to ask the 1,000 people to get it out all at the same time. You are going to end up losing your whole eye with good-intentioned people trying to help you."

On the other hand, messengers to the annual meeting can bring any issue before the convention, Welch said. If, however, messengers must guide trustees "from the floor of the convention," that defeats the purpose of electing responsible trustees except in "extraordinary circumstances," he concluded.

Welch said the trustee system is not what is broken, however, and has served Southern Baptists well.

"I am certain this is not the first time that we've had struggles. I am certain it will not be the last time. We must learn how to move through these hard channels but not lose focus on the larger goal of what we are doing together collectively," Welch added.

### JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Groundbreaking, Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg

- Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg, broke ground June 4 on their 15,000 sq. ft. multipurpose facility on their recently acquired 20acre site. Shown are Jack Riley, Sally Gorbett, Greg Craven, S.F. Carlisle, Jimmy Daltry, pastor Jim Burnett, Calvin Dean, Sara Levy, Ken Jordan, Barbara Wilson, Cecil Burge, and Al Wilson.
- Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, is hosting a community singing featuring The Reeves Family, June 17, 6 p.m.
- 3. Maybank Church, Hattiesburg, is hosting The Telestials June 16, 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken.
- Grace Chapel Church, Brooklyn, has established a Christian Do Karate school. The school is under the direction of John Stricker, 3rd degree black belt, who attends the church. Christian Do karate replaces east-ern mysticism with scripture and prayer making Christ the focus of all learning. On May 20th, the church hosted Neal Schiesske who is the founder of Koreja Do Christian Mar-shal Arts, a nationally known Christian institution, for the testing of the first class. On Sunday, during the morning service, time was alloted for Neal to speak on behalf of Christian Do Karate and award the belts and certificates.



5. Bible Drillers, Lake Como Church, Bay Springs



6. Youth Rally, Lake Como Church, Bay Springs

- Eleven students were promoted from white belt (Genesis) to Purple Belt (Deuteronomy) and three students from green belts (Exodus) to red belt (Proverbs). This class consisted of students from age 9 to 46.
- 5. Lake Como Church, Bay Springs, recognizes its Bible drillers. Shown are Rachel Bishop, Rachel McCulley, Emily Tuminello, Alex Cannon, Lyndsey Cannon, Kim Windham, Avanelle Upton, Brandi Burke, and pastor Kevin Bishop.
- 6. Lake Como Church, Bay Springs, had a youth rally Apr. 29 featuring The Band. The rally also attracted youth from Pine Grove Church, Goshen Church, and Maranatha Church. Shown are band members and pastor Kevin Bishop.
- John White was ordained to the gospel ministry at Bexley Church, Lucedale, on Apr. 9.
   Shown are Larry Havard, White, Ashton White, Garrett White, and Missy White.
- 8. First Church, Madison: Vacation Bible School, June 19-23, 8:45 a.m.-noon; ages K5-grade 6; signup at Strawberry Patch Park with games, June 17, 9 a.m.-noon.
- 9. Union Church, Picayune, recently held revival services in which Billy Spence, Kurt Jarrell, Kevin Wilcox, and Nicky Lee, men from the church who had been called to the gospel ministry led the services. During the revival another man, Braque Cutrer, was called to the ministry and preached his first sermon on the Thursday following the revival. Front row: Sonny Bly, Spence, Jarrell, and pastor Buddy Sherriff; back row: Lee, Wilcox, and Benjy Rigney.
- Vaiden Church, Vaiden, held VBS May 29-May 31, with 90 children and 50 adults participating. Shown are some of the participants.
- Lakeshore Church, Jackson: Vacation Bible School, June 18-23, 5:30 p.m.-8:15 p.m.; ages 4 through grade 6.
- Shiloh Church, Carroll Co., will host the Revelations Quartet June 25, 10:30 a.m. A love offering will be taken.
- 13. Progress Church, McComb, recognized Wanda Henry, the last surviving charter member of the church, during its 78th homecoming. Shown are pastor Billy Ray Simmons and Henry.



7. White Ordained to Ministry, Bexley Church, Lucedale



9. Revival Services, Union Church, Picayune



10. VBS, Vaiden Church, Vaiden



13. Simmons and Henry, Progress Church, McComb

### JUST FOR THE RECORD





14. Bible Drillers, Mt. Comfort Church, Bruce



15. Searcy Ordained, Puckett Church, Puckett

Shiloh Church, Carroll County: Revival, June 30-July 2; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.; Leon Holly, speaker; Doug Warren, music.

New Fellowship Church, Hickory: Revival, Jun. 25-28; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Scott Vaughn, speaker; Gary Thorne, music.

Faith Church, Silver Creek: Revival, Jun. 18-21; Sun., 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., with lunch at noon; Mon.-Wed., dinner, 6 p.m., worship, 7 p.m.; Jeff Davis, speaker; Diann Berry and Jerry Piegler, music; Daniel Perry, pastor.

Murphy Creek Church, Louisville: Revival, Jun. 25-29; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Junior Davis, Sturgis, speaker; David Tribble, Naniwaya, music; Walter Simmons, pastor.



# BAPTISTS

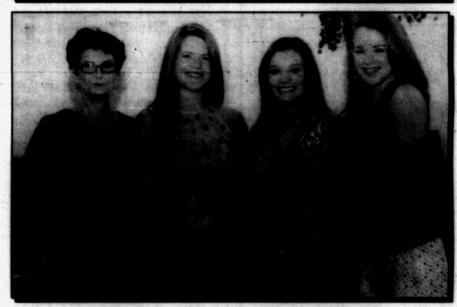
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- 14. Mt. Comfort Church, Bruce, recognizes its Bible drillers. Youth drillers are Rebekah Baker, Janae Harrelson, Christopher Baker, and leader Teresa Harrelson; children's drillers are Myranda Bennett, Benjamin Baker, and leader Debbi Harrelson.
- 15. Puckett Church, Puckett recently ordained Mack Searcy to the gospel ministry. Shown are pastor Grant McElveen, Searcy, and Prentiss Calhoun.
- 16. Cherry Creek Church,
  Pontotoc Association,
  broke ground May 28 for
  their new fellowship and
  activity building. Shown
  are pastor Rex Ard, Carrol
  Baker, Dennis Wilder, James
  Lewis, Mitzie Robbins,
  Suzzane Montgomery,
  Karen McLaughlin, and
  Harold Reeder.
- 17. First Church, Carthage, recognizes its Bible buddies, children, and youth Bible drillers. Shown (top photo) are front row: Kamaran Malone, Madison Quick, William Shirley Johnston, Chandler Mathis, and Sarah Taylor Mathis; back row: Jay Mathis, Mary Elizabeth Rhea, Hannah Smith, Debbie Pierce, Julianna Ingram, Amber Pierce, and Dot Hamilton. Youth drillers (bottom photo) are Melba Jones, Whitney Gross, Megan Cook, and Britney Gross.



16. Groundbreaking, Cherry Creek Church, Pontotoc Assoc.

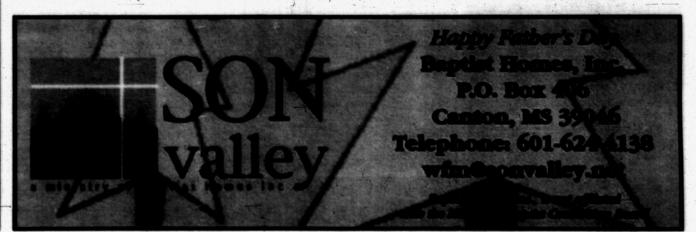




17. Bible Drillers, First Church, Carthage

R.E. Thompson has retired from Leawood Church, Memphis, Tenn., after serving 43 years in full-time music ministry. He is available for interim or supply work. He may be reached at rethom@earthlink.net.

McKay Pearce, a member of West Ellisville Church, Ellisville, has surrendered to the call of music evangelism/concert ministry and is available for concerts, revivals, or conferences. He may be reached at (601) 426-6890 or by email at mmcpearce@email.com.



J IBWA NBOZ UIJOHT UP TBZ BOF UP KVFHA PG CVU IA UIBU TAOU NA JT USVA; BOF J TQABL UIA XPSMF **UIPTA** UIJOHT XIJDI **IBWA** IABSF PG IJN.

KPIO AJHIU: UXAOUZ-TJY

Clue: I = HHave fun with cryptography and

exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Four: Ten.

### College & Seminary News



1. Washburn and Quinn Retire, BMC

- 1. Blue Mountain College educators, Sarah Sims Washburn and Anna Jackson Quinn, retired at the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Washburn served 41 years as an associate professor of social science. Quinn, an educator in North Mississippi for 39 years, taught at the high school and community college level before returning to her Alma Mater in 1991 as associate professor of English. Pictured are Sharon Enzor, vice president of academic affairs, Washburn, president Bettye Rogers Coward, and Quinn.
- The Mississippi College Art Department will host and exhibit by MFA graduate Martha Hamburg on Jun. 11-20 entitled Art through, a Sense of Self, a Sense of Place, a Sense of Community. It will be open for viewing from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Samuel Marshall Gore Gallery, 400A Aven Hall.

- 3. Southeastern Seminary celebrates 2006 spring graduation. Joel Ashley Ainsworth, Pearl, and Matthew H. Blaxton, Columbus, received Master of Divinity degrees.
- 4. The William Carey College Gulfport campus library received \$1000 from the Friends of Mississippi Libraries, Inc., to be used in restoring resources lost during Hurricane Katrina.
- 5. New Orleans Seminary celebrates its May 2006 and December, 2005, graduations. The following Mississippi students graduated on May 13:

Master of Arts in Christian Education

Michael D. Morgan, Lucedale Minister of Students, Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale

Jeff Box, Greenville

Senior Pastor, Suburban Church, New Orleans, La.

Master of Divinity with Specialization in Christian Education

Alton Ronald "Rusty" Thomaston II, Gautier Pastor, First Church, Lanett,

Master of Divinity with Specialization in **Evangelistic Church** Growth

John Saxon, Grenada Minister of Students, First Church, Hammond, La.

#### **Doctor of Ministry**

Jonathan M. Daniels, Cleveland Pastor, Monticello Church, Monticello

#### **Doctor of Philosophy**

Jeffrey Jay Rankin, Pascagoula Pastor, The Lord's Church, Kentwood

Bradley M. Rushing, Cleveland Pastor, First Church, Cleveland

The following Mississippi students graduated on Dec. 17, 2005:

#### Bachelor of Arts in **Christian Ministry**

Anne Sylvester Cramer, Kosciusko Children's Minister, First Church, Kosciusko

Jon Haimes, Houston,

Pastor, Bradford Chapel Church, Gore Springs

David M. Hays, Magee Pastor, Union Church, Raleigh

Jodie Hardy Marsh, Hattiesburg Interim Minister to Children, First Church, Hattiesburg

#### Master of Arts in **Christian Education**

Lee Allred, Hazlehurst Minister to Students/ Missions, First Church, Hazlehurst

Nicholas "Nick" Ward Hodges, Sr., Jackson Associate Pastor, First Church, Chickasaw

#### **Master of Divinity**

Phillip O'Neal Raybon Jr., Chaplain, United States Army

Kristie Pearce Roberts, Waveland Counselor, Youth Villages in Tupelo

Master of Divinity with Specialization in Biblical Languages

Philip R. Caples, New Albany Senior Pastor, Gum Grove Church, Brookhaven

#### Master of Theology

Jamie Duncan Holden, Columbus Minister of Education/ Administration, Hillcrest Church, Byram

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#### MS Positions

**COUNTRY WOODS BAPTIST CHURCH** IN BYRAM IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME CHILDREN/PRESCHOOL MINISTER. Please send resume to Janice Collins at 6737 Siwell Rd. Byram, MS 39272. HARRISBURG BAPTIST CHURCH,

TUPELO, MISS., is taking resumes for the position of minister to students. Please send your resumes/recommendations to John Bryson, chairman, Harrisburg Baptist Church, 4675 Cliff Gookin Blvd., Tupelo, MS 38801.

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Highland Baptist Church (Meridian) 1989 to (601) 483-7958 or call (800) 368-2705. **CORONADO BAPTIST CHURCH, a new** fellowship, is seeking a pastor for our tra-STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC., serving ditional, Kingdom-focused church. Resumes should be sent to: pastor search committee, PMB 316, 4501 N. Hy 7, Suite #8, Hot Springs Village, AR 71909. LICENSED MINISTER SEEKING REVIVAL WORK, pulpit supplying or bi-vocational position, call (601) 519-7012.

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All size units available. SUMMER SPE- MINISTER TO CHILDREN, FIRST ANSAS (800+ attendance) is seeking a church windows, reworking and repair,

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master's degree. Submit resume to stu-resumes for the position of Pastor. This is Church (Meridian) 1988 and two from Design, fabrication, repair. Fax illustrations dent minister search committee at bsg- a full-time position that serves a church whose average weekly attendance is 125. Eden is located in Southeast Arkansas. Deadline for receiving resumes is August 12, 2006. Please send resumes to Chairman Mike Harville 535 Ashley 81E, Hamburg, Arkansas 71646. (870) 853-8682.

**LOUIN BAPTIST CHURCH** invites you to our Centential Celebration the weekend of October 1, 2006, call (601) 739-3707.

#### **ALCOHOL IS A THREAT, TOO**

I would like to offer a suggestion to our Legislature about the cigarette and tobacco tax. I suggest that in addition to the increase in those taxes, the tax on beer, whiskey, and all other alcoholic drinks be increased. Raising the tax on beer, whiskey, and other alcoholic drinks as much as the cigarette tax might bring in enough money to free the tax on groceries — with lots of money left.

Some reasons that this has not been done are the whiskey and beer companies have power lobbyists with deep pockets of money to share for favors, and the consumers of whiskey and beer reach into

high places and could be a political risk. Whiskey and beer are more of a threat to our society than cigarettes. Cigarettes mainly harm the individual consumer. Whiskey and beer harm many people through broken homes, driving under the influence, loss of labor and income, and many other ways. There is now an epidemic of underage drinking and driving and dying on our highways.

I understand that one reason for the

increase in the tobacco tax is to encourage people to stop smoking. If it not just as important to discourage the use of

alcoholic beverages in any form?
I hope our legislators will give this some serious consideration.

Adron Horne Tupelo

#### **UNALIENABLE RIGHTS**

Editor:

When the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, they asked Thomas Jefferson to draft a declaration of independence. The action of the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, was the unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United

States of America. The document we know today as the Declaration of Independence contained these words:
"We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain unalienable Rights ..."

Unalienable rights are rights which cannot be surrendered or transferred. Down through the ages, God tried to have all people see that all have equal rights before Him. In the book of Job the oldest book of the Bible — Elihu reminded Job, "Is he not the One who says to kings, 'You are worthless,' and to nobles, 'You are wicked', who shows no partiality to princes and does not favor the rich over the poors for they are all the work ofhis hands?" (Job 34:18-19). God wanted the nation of Israel to provide equal justice (Deut. 10:17-19). The Apostle Peter says to the churches in Acts 10:34-35, "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right." The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 2:10-11, "For God does not show favoritism."

Finally, all will be judged equally (1 Peter 1:17). On this upcoming July 4, may we all see that unalienable rights belong to us all.

**David Norris** 

#### **ABORTION IS MURDER**

I don't believe a real born-again Christian would be found in an abortion clinic. According to the Bible, God hates hands that shed innocent blood (Pro. 6:16-17). Jesus'Himself condemned anyone who does harm to a child (Matt. 18:6, 18:10). When a person had been forgiven of his sins, he is to no longer serve sin. He's free. (Rom. 6:1-6). Not that we don't do something each day that's a sin of omission; it's when we blatantly sin and thumb our noses at God that we are

in dire trouble. Willfully sinning is a dangerous thing to do (Heb. 10:26-27).

I personally believe abortion is the murder of an innocent child. Abortion should not be a form of birth control; there are other things available for that. I'm praying for each woman who is contemplating abortion that she will either have the baby and put the baby out for adoption or raise the baby herself, hard though it may be.

God knows what these women are going through, and He will help them and bless them if they will put their

Abstinence is the most intelligent thing to do.

Shirley Fortner Byhalía

#### WHERE WERE WE?

Editor:

When the Roe v. Wade ruling was made in 1973, where were we? Did this just happen? Were we even concerned? I have to admit that I wasn't. I was old enough to vote but didn't!

We are all guilty of killing these babies because we sat back and did nothing. I hope and pray that anyone who has ever had an abortion will so see the Memorial to the Missing (at the Baptist Building in downtown Jackson) and ask for forgiveness for taking the little life that did not have a chance to live — but we are as guilty as the mothers.

We let this happen. We need to wake up and not let something like this happen again in our great nation.

Shirley Gore

#### **EASY TARGETS**

Editor:

It really makes me sad for you to treat Trent Lott and Thad Cochran the way you did in your editorial and particularly in your response to Lott's letter to you. The Baptist Record continues to bash the easy targets and to be known for what Baptists are against rather than what we are for. I know very little about the CSX issues because of my concern over our unique set of issues here in the Delta. I do know that it is more conservative than it is Christian to attack a person rather than to attack an issue. Why is it more important these days to be "conservative" than it is to be Christian?

Jon Doler Leland

#### SPEAKING IN TONGUES

I read the letter to the editor in the February 2 issue of The Baptist Record, in which tongues-speaking was men-tioned. I would like to share some

thoughts about speaking in tongues.

The three historical instances of speaking in tongues that are cited in Scripture all occur in Acts. All other references are discussions about it, not historical records of fact or occurance. At Pentecost, the disciples spoke in known and understood languages (Acts 2:4-11; 10:45-46; 19:6).

Aside from these three instances, the Apostle Paul discusses tongues. In 1 Cor. 14, apparently the language was unknown and in only one church in Corinth. The discussions is not a list of exhortations to speak in tongues, but a long list of restrictions against the practice.

**James Burke** 



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### Music Leadership Conference First Baptist Church, Jackson, July 6-8, 2006

Registration, Thursday, 12:30 p.m. Classes begin @ 1:30 p.m.

Cost of conference, \$30

In concert:

James Arrington Goff, organ, & Larry Shackley, piano Thursday evening

> One Voice Friday evening

**MS Baptist Symphony Orchestra** Saturday morning

Worship Leadership/General: Jimmy McCaleb, Church Music RFD Jim Futral, camp pastor Carl (Chip) Stam, Worship Empha arr (Crip) Stam, veorsing Enginesis lenjarnin Harlan, Congregational Singing/Directing arry Garner, Theocentric, Christocentric or Egocentri lake Scafidel, Praise Teams & Praise Bands

Keyboard: Larry Shackley, Piano Gayden Sikes, Organ Lew King, Introduction to Finale Blake Scalidel, Electronic Keyboard in Worship

Preschool/Children's Choire: Derry Billingsley, Preschool Charlotte McElroy, Younger children Kim Price, Older Children

Senior Adults: Gerald Ware

Leon Bedsole

\* Childcare will not be available due to renovation at FBC



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Lovett Elementary School Staff

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Bob & Mitzi Jackson Joe Jackson Mrs. Jessie Powers Mrs. Nellie Morrison Mrs. Lee Audis Jayroe Dr. Linda Peppe

Miss JoLane Joh Mrs. Nell Johnson Sherry Reid

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Mrs. Mary D. Hartford Camille Thomas Ms. Suzanne J. Braddock Ms. Joy Ann Hennessey Ms. Deanna B. Miller

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Cynthia Fleming Mrs. Allyne Statham Bobby & Deanie Stewart

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Ms. Mignonne Stephens
J. Sam Lackey
Mr. & Mrs. Lois Knight-Moon Parks Mr. & Mrs. Seals Crocker Mrs. Virginia Land Mrs. Fannye Pollan Gene Long
Men's Bible Class, FBC-Mag am E. & Janice S. Taylor Ms. Inez B. Thornhill Mrs. Velma Robbins Mr. & Mrs. Jim Blair neth Magee Bill, Ann Marie & Leianne Lovele Kenneth Magee Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy McCaleb & Family Robert Lee "Bob" Mahon

Mr. & Mrs. Henry M. McCord larian Payne Galilee Baptist Church Adult II SSC, Galilee BC-Gl Dr. John Douglas Pigott, Jr. Glenda & Jerry Fry ward Pounds Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Hughes Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Porter Mrs. Lelia Putnam Dr. & Mrs. Anthony S. Kay Adin Moore Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Roberts
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Gwinn & Lane Gordon

Miss Janet C. Smith Ms. Wanda L. Smith Vernon K. Smith Malcolm K. & Pamela S. Emfinger
Duane Stauffer

Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Hughes Mr. Ellis Steed Mr. & Mrs. Dick Catledge



The Baptist Children's Village is proud to host four collegiate summer missionaries on the India Nunnery Campus. The missionaries will work in the activities/recreation department and with the BCV Campus pastor. Pictured are Lindsay Parton, Jackson, LA; Hallie Farmer, Summerville, SC; Amanda Coleman, Athens, AL; and Brett Cutrer, Hattiesburg, MS.

Mr. & Mrs. James C. Brents Jr. Mr. & Mrs. Vernon Haygood Sr. Mrs. Carrie Stewart Mrs. Jean Wo Harry Neal & Weezie Corder Billie Jean Sullivan Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Stevenson Mr. Herbert Spain Mr. & Mrs. Mark C. Grimes Jr. Mrs. Ruby Sullivan Miss Lexi Sulliv Mr. & Mrs. John T. Keeton Jr. Mr. & Mrs. George M. Eagle Mr. & Mrs. Gray Harrison Jr. Father of Kennon S Ms. Jewel B. Brown

Shalley Vaughn Florence High School Faculty Leaf River BC-Louin Ms. Sarah P. Scot my C. Walker Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Revette ary (Hank) Ward Dungan Engineer Hazel Watkins Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Tuggle

Ms. Janice K. Pullen

Mr. & Mrs. George M. Eagle

Larry Webb Mr. & Mrs. Walter C. Fulto Robert West Ms. Gail M. Mora Mary Westbrook Siloam Baptist Church Whittington Mr. & Mrs. Vernon Haygood Sr. Mrs. Bertha Willia Mrs. Shirley M. Hur Minnie L. Wolf Mrs. Doloris Horto Mrs. Betty Woodruff Mr. Jane Wylle
Mrs. Jane Wylle
Tommic Joe Wylie Mrs. Eileen N. Young
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Rai

### Support for 2006 High School Seniors

The Baptist Children's Village has four high school seniors graduating this month. Some will go away to college/technical school; others will continue to live on the respective campuses and commute to school, but all are continuing their education. They all have a list of special needs to help them make this transition.

You can make a donation designated for our seniors or contact Mrs. Chrystelle Thames at 601-922-2242 or cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com for specific items off of their needs list. All donations should be sent to:

The Baptist Children's Village PO Box 27 • Clinton MS 39060-0027

### FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Philip: Faith Leads to Witnessing

Acts 8:4-8, 26-40

By Les Colvin

In his book, The Purpose Driven Life, author Rick Warren states the five purposes of Christians and the church. One of those purposes is evangelism. Evangelism is at the heart of the New Testament church and thus every believer. It is the primary thrust of Christ's Great Commission when He said "Go and make disciples, baptizing them ... (Matt. 28).

It is sad to say that many Christians have failed to make evangelism a priority in their lives. The late Sam Shoemaker, an Episcopalian bishop, summed up the situation this way: "In the Great Commission the Lord has called us to be—like Peter—fishers of men. We've turned the commission around so that we have become merely keepers of the aquarium. Occasionally I take some fish out of your fishbowl and put them into mine, and vice-

versa, but we are all tending the same fish."

The book of Acts is the story of the establishment and growth of

the church. The church then, as now was established and grew through evangelism, both mass and personal. The story of Philip in Acts 8 is an example of witnessing through personal soulwinning. Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch gives us a perfect picture of faith that leads to witnessing and shows us how we too can be witnesses of the Gospel.

In Acts 8:26-29, Philip has a life-changing encounter with the Lord. Acts 6 tells us that Philip was one of the first deacons. Following the death of Stephen, the church at Jerusalem was persecuted and scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Philip went to Samaria and proclaimed Christ there (verses 1-8). In verse 26, the Lord speaks to Philip and tells him to leave Samaria and go



Colvin

to "the desert road" toward Gaza. Now Philip had a very successful ministry in Samaria. Many people were spiritually and physically healed and there was "great joy in the city." However, God had an important assignment for Philip on the desert road. Why

on the desert road. Why was Philip willing to leave his successful ministry and go to the desert? Philip followed God into the desert because he was "filled with the Spirit" (Acts 6:3). In Eph. 5:18 God calls us to be "filled with the Spirit," and in Gal. 5:16-18 He tells us to be led by the Spirit. Philip had surrendered his ministry and life to the Holy Spirit of God. It is only through the Spirit's filling and leading in our lives that we can be effective witnesses. We must first allow God to do a work "in us," Then He can then do a work "through us." Notice that Philip did not know why he was traveling down the road. However, being led by the Spirit, he notices a man along the way. When we follow the Spirit, we will be sensitive to opportunities to share the Gospel and look for open

doors. Philip runs into an individual who seems to be just waiting for someone to come along and tell him about Jesus. We see also that Philip met the man along the road. It is along the road in our every day lives that we will encounter people who need the Lord.

In Acts 8:30-35, observe the aspects of Philip's conversation with the eunuch and how he shares the Gospel with him. First, he begins by asking questions. He notices the man is reading the Bible. He takes an interest in the man. That is the first step in evangelism, taking a personal interest in people and what is going on in their lives. The man is seeking answers. He is just like people all around us who are seeking answers and purpose in their lives. He had questions and Philip was there to provide the answers. Second, he explained the Scripture. Romans 10:17 says "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Rick Warren says in The Purpose Driven Life, "It takes truth to transform." Third, Philip "preached" unto him Jesus. Philip knew that salvation comes only through faith

in Jesus Christ. When we share the Word and share Jesus with people, God will honor our faith and obedience. Not all will immediately come to know Christ, be seeds are planted for God's Spirit to continue to work in their lives.

God's Spirit to continue to work in their lives.

In Acts 8:36-40 Philip helps this new believer profess his faith by baptizing him. Baptism is a demonstration of the death and burial of the old life and the new life we have in Jesus Christ. It is essential that new believers be encouraged in their faith as they begin their new life. Many times, we focus on getting people saved and then ignore or leave them alone after they become Christians. The Great Commission says we are to baptize them and "teach them to observe." Helping new Christians grow in their faith is one of the most important tasks of the church.

God calls everyone to be a witness. Not just the pastor or evangelist. The Great Commission is for us all. By faith, we can be witnesses to the people God sends along the way in our lives.

Colvin is Minister of Education/ Administrator at First Church, McComb.

### EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Acknowledge That Life Seems Unfair

Job 15: 5-6, 9-10, 20; 16:19-21; 19:5-6, 25-27; 21:7-9

By Ginger M. Caughman

You don't need to make a list of reasons that life can seem unfair. You are either in a challenging or difficult circumstance now or you will be! Life can be tough. Some seem to have more than their share of trouble.

What do you do when faced with horrible news? What's the choice? Live in the dark, in bitterness, anger, rebellion, cynicism, stoicism, hedonism, or denial? Or choose to trust God and walk in the light of His love, grace, mercy and peace. Dark or Light? Sometimes we want to walk in the light but in the midst of sorrow or trials we feel we're walking in the gray and need the encouragement of friends.

The popular Christian writer James Dobson penned a book, "When God Doesn't Make Sense." Ironically I read the entire book one night recently during a tornado threat accompanied by sounds

of warning sirens. Ominous!
Dr. Dobson said, "For all who are weary and burdened by the stresses of living, it all comes down to this simple concept, God is not against us for our sins. He is for us against our sins. That makes all the difference" (p. 196). See Romans 5:1-2.

As we continue our study Job's friends give a second round of speeches and we consider Job's response. Accusations and criticism hurt but we must search our hearts before God and see if there's an element of truth of which we need to repent. However in this encounter, Job's friends made unfair appraisals of his life.



Caughman

Eliphaz misjudged Job's motive and attitude accusing Job of deception and arrogance.

Bildad and Zophar alike never changed their stance of condemnation against Job.

nation against Job. In Job 19:25-27, Job affirms his belief in God. "I know that my Redeemer lives." The

word translated "Redeemer" in verse 25 is God. "Job's yearning for an Intercessor and hope for a resurrection came together here, in the middle of deep dejection, in a triumphant assertion of faith. Job's problems were not over. He still did not understand." ("Holman Bible Handbook" P 318)

Handbook," P. 318).

Job replies to Zophar. (Read Job 21:7-14). From the perspective of Job and his friends, the scales of God's justice are balanced in the course of this earthly life. Job's reply to Zophar and the other friends affirmed that the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous can make life seem terribly unfair.

But that is only earth's view.

In the study, "Experiencing God," Henry Blackaby reminds Christians to try to look at life from God's perspective and not life's circumstances. "God's perspective is vital. Go to God and ask Him to show you His perspective on your circumstance. Look back at your circumstances from the heart of God." (Blackaby p. 97)

God." (Blackaby, p. 97).

When you hope in God, people may misjudge you or ignore you. Many people may seem to go unpunished. But God wants His children to place their hope in Him at all times. "When Circumstances Are Confusing" is a lesson in "Experiencing God." Henry Blackaby says, "You do need to remember that God is sovereign. You may face a situation like Job experienced where God does not tell you what He is doing. In those instances acknowledge God's love and sovereignty and depend on His sustaining grace to see you through the situation." (Blackaby, p. 98).

Look for comfort in this Biblical Truth: We can place our hope in the Lord, even when life seems unfair. "Through the sufferings of Job, the book points to the two universal human needs: the need for a Deliverer and the need for release from mortality. No one is competent to stand before God, and everyone longs to escape death. These needs, poignantly portrayed in Job, are dramatically fulfilled in the New Testament." (Holman, p. 318). We can hope in the God of justice whether or not we see His justice carried out in this life. Jesus conquered sin and death. Thanks be to God!

A sign on a pastor's desk: "I believe in the sun when it does not shine. I believe in God when He is silent. I know the sun is there even on the darkest day. And when darkness veils Jesus' lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace!"

Ginger Caughman is a Sunday School teacher and choir member at First Church, Magee.

### Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an email form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Record

Please make articles concise. Include the **who**, **what**, **when**, **where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a IPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## Bivocational pastors asking for office within NAMB

Editor's note: Following is a more detailed report on an event that previously appeared in The Baptist Record.

PICAYUNE, Miss. (BP and local reports) — The Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association (SBBMA) has voted to submit a proposal to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) asking that the North American Mission Board (NAMB) fund an office of bivocational ministry.

The proposal, approved unanimous-ly by more than 70 bivocational ministers at the organization's May 5-6 meeting has been delivered to NAMB's board of trustees and the SBC Executive Committee, association leaders said.

The meeting was held in Mississippi at the Pearl River Association's campground near Picayune.

The proposal, framed in resolution form, noted that "bivocationally-led existing churches baptize more new believers per 100 members than churches led by full-compensated pastors."

The statistic, however, cannot be readily confirmed by current data, officials at NAMB and LifeWay Christian Resources, which oversees the SBC's Annual Church Profile, subsequently told Baptist Press. Dale Holloway, bivocational consultant of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board staff, told BP the statistic appeared in three research reports by the former Home Mission Board (now NAMB), in 1983, 1991 and 1993.

The bivocational ministers' resolution stated that NAMB "no longer supports a national bivocational missionary who provides assistance and encourages bivocational ministers and their church-

es, except in cases of new church plants." Holloway told the Tennessee Baptist and Reflector that NAMB has a staff person who does some work for bivocational ministers, but the staff person also

has several other jobs.

Holloway, who formerly worked in bivocational ministry at the Home Mission Board, reported that NAMB had a bivocational ministry consultant for 21 years until 2003.

A statement issued by the North American Mission Board regarding the bivocational ministers' proposal noted:



BIVOS MEET — Bivocational ministers at the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association's May 5-6 meeting near Picayune were (from left) Tom Echols and Dolphus Cleveland (president), both of Texas; Glen Alshie (first vice president) of South Carolina; Ray Guilder, bivocational ministries director for the Tennessee Baptist Convention; Lester Evans, bivocational consultant for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina; Jimmy McCaleb, bivocational consultant in the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's church music department of the; Dale Holloway, Mississippi Baptists' bivocational consultant; and Leonard Foster of New Mexico. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

"The North American Mission Board strongly affirms the excellent work of bivocational ministers and their churches. The lostness of North America will not be penetrated significantly through seminary-educated, fully funded ministers alone. Both lay and bivocational leaders must engage the mission fields

in ever-increasing numbers.
"However, NAMB's primary ministry assignments are to assist SBC churches in doing effective evangelism and plant-ing healthy new churches among all peoples and in all communities in North America. Therefore, NAMB's responsibility and desire is to work with all of our churches, both bivocational and fully funded, to assist them in reaching the lost. Every SBC church regardless of size, location or type of leader can involve its members in reproduction

both of new believers and new churches. It is to this end that NAMB's passion and

resources will be deployed."

During their meeting, the bivocational ministers also heard a report on their numbers from Lloyd Elder of the Moench Center for Leadership Training at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. Elder reported that about 70 percent of churches in the Southern Baptist Convention have average Sunday School attendance of 92 or less, with Elder projecting that most of those churches are led by bivocational pastors. Adolphus Cleveland of Lubbock,

Texas, president of the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association, appealed to SBC leaders and church members in his address to help small churches "be the best they can be where they are."

Cleveland also challenged "every association in the Southern Baptist Convention to help at least one pastor a year become mortgage-free.

Some churches need to be "re-purposed," he said, especially if survival is their goal. Some Anglo churches need to become black and some black churches need to become Hispanic churches, he suggested.

An African-American, Cleveland referred to the racial and economic divisions in America and said divisions exist in the SBC. Bivocational ministers can help other ministers and churches see those gaps, he said, and build bridges to help cross them. In conjunction with the meeting, the

ministers and some members from their churches participated in mission projects to help other bivocational ministers who were victims of last fall's Gulf Coast hurricanes, working at sites in both Louisiana and Mississippi May 1-4 or 8-12. The association added the first-ever

mission projects to this year's national meeting which already had been slated for Picayune in the New Orleans area. Ray Gilder of the Tennessee Baptist

Convention, which provided funds for lodging while a Tennessee association

sent 14 volunteers to provide meals, noted that the bivocational ministers' involvement in the mission projects was a challenge because they had to arrange for time off from their other jobs. But if the ministers could make such arrangements, it would help them lead their church members to be involved as well, Gilder said.

Because the mission work, which had focused in large measure on renovation of damaged homes, was rewarding for the participants, the association began plans to develop a Bivo Builders group. Plans also were made for a mission project in conjunction with the April 26-28,

2007, association meeting in Denver.

Ed Murphy, pastor of Shoreline Park
Church in Bay St. Louis, was among the
pastors assisted in the missions projects.

The congregation is constructing 6-by-8-foot storage sheds, or pods, for hurricane victims who are still living in FEMA trailers or other housing and need a place to store items. The church and volunteers have delivered 500 pods to area residents and plan to build 200 more if they receive enough funds.

"It's quite a monumental task that we're going through," Murphy noted. The church, located five miles from the

ocean, was flooded to the ceiling of the sanctuary by about 28 feet of water. The first worship service in the church building after the storm was on Easter. The congregation earlier had met under a tree and then in a tent. The church only canceled one Sunday morning service.

Murphy's home was not damaged, but he lost his maintenance job at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian, which is owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The assembly was too damaged by Hurricane Katrina to remain open. His wife also lost her office job there because the

office building was destroyed.

Most of the church's members lost their homes. Murphy and his wife hosted several church members for two months in their 1,000-square-foot home.

Murphy has led his church to respond to the needs by developing a small village on its grounds. He and vol-unteers have adapted storage buildings into air-conditioned dorms which can house 40 volunteers and an air-conditioned kitchen. They also built bathrooms with showers and erected a huge tent where volunteers meet and eat.

Murphy, who has served the church for seven years, noted, "If we don't have people in the community, we won't be able to reach anybody" on the Gulf Coast where 75% of residents are unchurched.

He asked for prayer as the "long hot summer" begins and for volunteers, who don't need to bring tools because they already have been donated.

Another pastor at the meeting was Vernon Robinson of First Cornerstone Church in Picayune.

Robinson said the church building sustained only minor damage to the roof, which was repaired with an insur-ance settlement. The worst impact on his congregation, he said, was that over half of the members lost their jobs. Another third left the area to attend a college which moved its campus.
"We suffered quite a bit like that,"

Robinson said.

The future of the church is bright, he said. The city of Picayune has doubled since the hurricanes and in five years planners predict 400 new houses will be built near the church.



RENOVATION ONGOING — Ed Murphy, bivocational pastor of Shoreline Park Church in Bay St. Louis, sits in the sanctuary which was flooded by Hurricane Katrina and is still being renovated. Shoreline was among the churches assisted in mission projects in conjunction with Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association meeting in Mississippi. (BP photo by Connie Davis Bushey)